

## Editing TIPS

**What is Editing?** Editing means many things to many people. But here it means only one thing: taking care of any problems you have with writing conventions like spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage. You can make minor changes to the content of your piece—words here, a phrase there—but if you want to make bigger changes, go back to the Revising stage.

**What Makes Editing Hard?** Editing is hard because there a lot of things you need to know in order to do it well—more things than you can learn in any one year of school. To edit for spelling you have to know many words and be able to use a dictionary. To edit for punctuation you have to understand how to use every type of punctuation your writing needs.

**What Should I Do?** Edit the things you know how to edit. Then, ask someone else to help you with the rest. Watch what they do so you can do it on your own next time. Ask questions if you don't understand something. That's the only way to learn.















### Ask yourself these questions

- **Have you used the same word too many times** in one sentence or paragraph? Use a thesaurus to find alternatives.
- **Are any of your sentences hard to understand?** Rewrite them to make your thoughts clear.
- **Which words could you cut to make a sentence stronger?** Words like “just” “quite”, “very”, “really” and “generally” can often be removed.
- **Are your sentences grammatically correct?** Keep a careful look out for problems like subject-verb agreement and staying consistent in your use of the past, present or future tense.
- **Is everything spelt correctly?** Don't trust your spell-checker – it won't pick up every mistake. Proofread as many times as necessary.
- **Have you used punctuation marks correctly?** Commas often cause difficulties. You might want to check out the Daily Writing Tips articles on punctuation.

**Tip:** *Print out your work and edit on paper. Many writers find it easier to spot mistakes this way.*

## EDITING CHART TIPS

You do not need to use these but this will give your some ideas on how to edit affectively.

Symbol	Meaning	Symbol	Meaning
	spelling error		capitalize
	new paragraph		make lower case letter
	not needed		reverse order
	insert		run-on sentence
	insert a comma		fragment
	insert quotation marks		confusing or unclear
	insert a period		take out or delete

### Capitalization

Is the first word of each sentence capitalized?  
Are all proper nouns capitalized?

### Overall Appearance

Is the handwriting legible? Is the word processing format consistent?  
Are formatting, spacing, and margins appropriate?

### Punctuation

Is end punctuation (.?! ) appropriate?  
Is internal punctuation (, ; " ") appropriate?  
Are apostrophes, hyphens, and dashes used appropriately?  
Are quotation marks used accurately?

### Spelling/Sentences

Does it look right? Does it sound right?  
Are your sentences correct? Are there any run-on-sentences? Sentence Fragments?  
Do my sentences make sense?